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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/753,726	01/03/2001	Atsushi Okada	1232-4671	3777

7590 06/18/2004
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345 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10154

EXAMINER

CORRIELUS, JEAN M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2172

16

DATE MAILED: 06/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/753,726

Applicant(s)

OKADA ET AL.

Examiner

Jean M Corrielus

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 April 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6, 9-16, 18-22, 24, 27-34, 37-43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5, 7, 8, 17, 23, 25, 26, 35 and 36 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action in response the request for continued examination (RCE) filed on April 30, 2004, in which claims 1-43 are presented for further examiner.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-43 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection necessitated by amendment.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. ' 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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4. Claims 1-4, 6, 9-16, 18-22, 24, 27-35 and 38-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Frisina US Patent no. 6,385,621 in view of Matsuzaki et al., (hereinafter "Amatsuzaki") US Patent no. 5,767,848.

As to claim 1, Frisina discloses the claimed "a first storage medium which stores a standard man-hour database designed to be readable by a computer (col.1, lines 28-60; col. 2, lines 55-67), in which a number of groups each constituted by a work standard described by a standard expression and man-hour corresponding to the work standard are registered in advance, (col. 3, lines 3-15); "a second storage unit, designed to be readable by a computer, which stores a graphic file of an image for graphically showing a procedures of a work standard" (col.); "setting means for, for each of target work standards to which man-hours are to be given, match an expression of target work standard with the standard expressions of the work standards in said standard man-hour database and set a link to graphic file corresponding to a matching work standard and a standard man-hour, as a man-hour of the target work standard, corresponding to the matching work standard in said database (col. 3, lines 54-col. 4, lines 11); and a man-hour file unit adapted to store a file of man-hours of the target work standard set by said setting unit, (col. 6, lines 40-44 and col. 4, lines 12-19). Frisina discloses in addition to labor requirements, provision is made for assigning parts needed for specific operation/suboperations such as bolts, nuts, gaskets, etc., so that material requirements are identified. Tools needed can also be identified, though this may be limited to special tools beyond those allocated to a particular

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craftsman's, (col. 4, lines 42-47). However, Frisina does not explicitly teach target work standard.

However, Frisina discloses a software program which is useful in resource planning as a job standard program which used to create maintain, and manipulate standards for maintenance work (col.1, lines 28-33). On the other hand, Matsuzaki, discloses a development support system for supporting the cooperative work of a plurality of persons, wherein the support system enables a plurality of members of a task group stationed at separate places to hold a conference at every stage of cooperative work using a plurality of information processors for exchanging information about their individual achievements and processing their work with the information obtained in the conference. In particular, Matsuzaki discloses the use of a target work standard (col.2, lines 15-45). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to the teachings to the cited reference because one having ordinary skill in the art would have found it motivated to utilize a such a combination in order to manage and maintain the performance of the system.

As to claims 2 and 20, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 1, wherein the target work standard to which the man-hour is to be given is described by an operation phrase representing an operation of a work, an objection phrase representing a target of the operation, and a comment phrase representing auxiliary information related to the operation and/or object,

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and each of the work standards in said database is also described by an operation phrase, object phrase, and comment phrase, (col. 8, lines 12-68).

As to claims 3 and 21, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 1, wherein for the target work standard to which the man-hour is to be given, a first comment related to an object of an operation, an object phrase representing the object of the operation, a second comment related to the operation, and an operation phrase representing the operation of the work: are described in a predetermined order, and for each of the work standards in said database, a first comment, object phrase, second comment, and operation phrase are also described in the predetermined order, (col. 8, lines 12-68).

As to claims 4 and 22, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 1, wherein said setting means preferentially executes search based on complete matching between the expression of the target work standard and the standard expression of the work standard in said standard man-hour database, (col. 6, lines 6-23).

As to claims 6 and 24, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 4, wherein, when the search of the expression of the target work standard in said standard man-hour database fails, said setting means executes search in a second man-hour database whose degree of

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standardization is lower than that of said standard man-hour database, (col. 2, lines 55-col. 3, lines 2).

As to claims 9 and 27, Frisina further discloses -the system according to claim 1, wherein standard man-hour data in said standard man-hour database contains a man- hour value and data related to a set condition when the man-hour value is set, (col. 6, lines 34-64).

As to claims 10 and 28, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 9, wherein the condition data is referred to by a directory in a memory space of said automatic man-hour setting system, and said setting means sets a directory value of the searched set condition data of the work standard as the man-hour of the target work standard, (col. 6, lines 34-64).

As to claims 11 and 29, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 6, further comprising analysis means for analyzing the work standard to assign the man-hour when no matching is obtained by searching the second man-hour database, (col. 2, lines 55-col. 3, lines 2).

As to claims 12 and 30, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 6, further comprising analysis means for analyzing the work standard to assign the man-hour when no matching is obtained by searching said standard man-hour database, (col. 3, lines 3-21).

As to claims 13 and 31, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 11, wherein said analysis means uses a creation tool with the same reference as that in creating contents of said standard man--hour database, (col. 3, lines 3-21).

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As to claims 14 and 32, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 12, wherein said analysis means uses a creation tool with the same reference as that in creating contents of said second man-hour database, (col. 3, lines 3-21).

As to claims 15 and 33, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 1, wherein further comprising download means for downloading a plurality of work standard data to which man-hours are to be given, (col. 6, lines 34-44).

As to claims 16 and 34, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of downloadable work standard are stored in an external database, and said download means comprises means for downloading directories of the downloadable work standards from the external database and displaying the directories, and selection means for selecting an arbitrary one of the displayed directories, thereby selecting the target work standard to which the man-hour is to be given, (col. 6, lines 3444).

As to claim 18, Frisina further discloses a distributed client/server database system comprising: a server including said man-hour setting system, (col. 2, lines 55-col. 3, lines 2) of claim 1; and a plurality of clients each having said setting means, (col. 2, lines 55-col. 3, lines 2) of claim 1.

With respect to claim 19, the subject matter of claim 19 is rejected in the analysis above claim 1; therefore, claim 19 is also rejected for the same reasons as given in claim 1.

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As to claim 38, Frisina further discloses the method according to claim 19, wherein the man-hour file has, for each work standard, a field where a log of addition and correction related to the man-hour is recorded, (col. 4, lines 12-19).

As to claim 39, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 1, wherein the man-hour file has, for each work standard, a field where a log of addition and correction related to the man-hour is recorded, (col. 4, lines 12-19).

As to claim 40, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 39, further comprising means for referring to the log field, (col. 4, lines 12-19).

As to claim 41, Frisina further discloses a computer, program storage medium which stores program codes of said automatic man-hour setting method to realize said automatic man-hour setting method of claim 19 by a computer system, (col. 2, lines 55-col. 3, lines 2).

As to claim 42, Frisina further discloses the system according to claim 2, wherein for the target work standard to which the man-hour is to be given, a first comment related to an object of an operation, an object phrase representing the object of the operation, a second comment related to the operation, and an operation phrase representing the operation of the work are described in a predetermined order, and for each of the work standards in said database, a first comment, object phrase, second comment, and operation phrase are also described in the predetermined order, (col. 8, lines 12-68).

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As to claim 43, Frisina further discloses the method according to claim 20, wherein for the target work standard to which the man-hour is to be given, a first comment related to an object of an operation, an object phrase representing the object of the operation, a second comment related to the operation, and an operation phrase representing the operation of the work are described in a predetermined order, and for each of the work standards in the database, a first comment, object phrase, second comment, and operation phrase are also described in the predetermined order, (col. 8, lines 12-68).

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 5, 7, 8, 17, 23, 25, 26 and 35-37 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Reason for Indicating Allowable Subject Matter

6. The present application has been thoroughly reviewed. Upon extensive and exhaustive searches of various databases (see search notes in case jacket), the examiner respectfully submits that the claimed feature “ wherein said setting means uses search based on partial matching for the target work standard for which the search based on complete matching to the standard expression of the work standard in said standard man-hour database fails” and “wherein the external database stores the downloadable work standards having a hierarchical structure according to the degree of assembly, said download means downloads upper directories to said man-hour setting system together with the directories of the downloadable work standards, said display means displays the

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downloaded work standard directories and upper directories together, and said selection means can designate to select whether one of the displayed work standard directories or upper directories” in claims 5, 7-8, 17, 23, 25-26 and 35-37, in conjunction with all other limitations of the dependent and independent claims would not found anticipated or obvious over the prior art made of record. Therefore, the pending 5, 7-8, 17, 23, 25-26 and 35-37 are hereby allowed.

7. Since allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant is encouraged to submit formal drawings in response to this Office Action. The early submission of formal drawings will permit the Office to review the drawings for acceptability and to resolve any informalities remaining therein before the application is passed to issue. This will avoid possible delays in the issue process.

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jean M. Corrielus whose telephone number is (703) 306-3035. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (12:00pm - 7:30 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John E Breene can be reached on (703) 305-9790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jean M. Corrielus

Patent Examiner

June 9, 2004